



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, NEIGHBORHOODS, AND STRATEGIC PLANNING DEPARTMENT

### M E M O R A N D U M

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DATE: January 31, 2007

TO: Toni Nelson, Council President  
Members of the Renton City Council

VIA: Kathy Keolker, Mayor

FROM: Alex Pietsch, Administrator

STAFF CONTACT: Rebecca Lind (ext 6588)

SUBJECT: **Ordinance Revising Cluster and Design Guidelines,  
Enacting Tree Retention Standards, and Amending Animal  
Regulations**

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#### ISSUE

Anticipating an increase in vesting of development in the East Renton Plateau at the end of the current sewer moratorium, should the City enact improved regulations addressing specific design and quality of development concerns as an exception to the annual docket review cycle?

#### RECOMMENDATION

- Consider improved regulations consistent with the East Renton Plateau Citizens Task Force preliminary recommendations addressing the following topics:
  - Cluster of development in the R-4 zone
  - Design standards for single family structures in the R-1, R-4, and R-8 zones
  - Tree retention
  - Animal regulations
- Process these amendments prior to the potential effective date of the Preserve Our Plateau Annexation so that vested development will be regulated by the revised standards. Authorize review of the proposed development regulations pursuant to RMC 4-9-025 C outside the annual docket as a priority, with the understanding that additional amendments addressing landscape and street tree standards, tree type and variety, tree canopy standards, and a comprehensive citywide urban forestry program will be developed as part of a subsequent work program in conjunction with the Community Services Department.

## BACKGROUND

The City convened the East Renton Plateau Citizens Task Force to review and make recommendations on rezoning and community planning issues in the East Renton area. The rezoning work was completed in 2006 and adopted by the City Council. As part of this work, the Task Force raised a number of zoning text issues that are pertinent to community planning and quality of life and continues to work on recommendations refining these development standards. At the same time, the City put a moratorium on out-of-city sewer availability certificates for undeveloped property in this area, and this moratorium has been in effect for a year and a half. The Council agreed to extend the moratorium until the election and potential effective date of annexation. As a result, land in the area was removed from the development process. As soon as the annexation is effective, land will again become available in this area. Property owners of several larger parcels may apply for development permits shortly after annexation. The proposed code amendments will implement several Task Force recommendations so that properties vesting for development immediately after annexation will be regulated by rules more closely reflecting citizen concerns.

## PROPOSAL SUMMARY

### Cluster Provisions (see Attachment 1)

The Task Force recommended that the provisions for cluster development in the R-4 be expanded. Adopted city code restricts cluster development to areas within 600 feet of the R-8 zone. The Task Force recommended that cluster development be allowed throughout the R-4 zone.

### Design Standards (see Attachment 1)

Architectural design standards are now only required for cluster development in the R-4 zone. The Task Force raised the issue of quality development particularly on the NE 4<sup>th</sup> St corridor. The proposal would expand the applicability of the existing adopted standards throughout the R-1, R-4, and R-8 zones citywide and would benefit neighborhoods throughout Renton.

### Tree Retention (see Attachment 2)

Proposed code would codify an existing administrative interpretation of zoning rules and provide clarification of standards now being used for replacement and replanting trees. The amendments also close an existing loophole in regulations that allow trees to be cleared prior to application for development. These proposed code changes are the first phase of a larger work program that will result in a citywide urban forestry plan addressing broader issues of tree and landscape planting, street trees, and the canopy of trees on public and private lands within the city.

The proposed code revisions are needed as a minimum standard now because development of large forested parcels is anticipated in the near future within the East Renton PAA.

Animal Regulations (see Attachment 3)

The Task Force recommended greater allowances for large animal husbandry and requests that “non-conforming” animal use be vested to the land rather than limited to the life span of a particular animal.

CONCLUSION

The proposed amendments are recommended by staff as the minimum set of changes needed to implement a basic set of project review standards. The cluster and design standards are adopted now but apply only to a limited number of properties. The tree retention standards modify and improve the approach staff is now using for project review. The recommended improvements incorporate staff’s comments and experience working with the existing administrative rules as applied to actual projects.